

## **Benjamin John Dunsheath and his Auckland Smelting Company**

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The history of gold mining world-wide is littered with failed companies. In the Te Aroha Mining District, every company failed, usually speedily, even those financed by overseas investors.<sup>1</sup> The Auckland Smelting Company, so called because it was registered in Auckland and intended to smelt Tui ore, mostly containing base metals, when first discovered in 1885 at the top of the range, was mined for silver and gold. Formed in 1949, like its predecessors, this under-capitalized company struggled to open up the mine and to treat the refractory low-grade ore, and soon failed, despite extracting some financial assistance from a reluctant Mines Department.

### **Dunsheath's business career**

After arriving in New Zealand in 1919, Benjamin John Dunsheath, was an agent for British engineering firms.<sup>2</sup> In 1922 he formed his first private company, B.J. Dunsheath Ltd, to sell machinery and tools, with a capital of £2,000 provided by himself and his wife, the only shareholders.<sup>3</sup> In 1932 he was sued for not fulfilling an employment agreement and the company, after being sued for not paying for machinery, was wound up because of its liabilities.<sup>4</sup> Its successor, the Dunsheath Machinery Company, also imported and sold machinery, and had the same two shareholders; he was managing director, and his wife was its secretary and also the other director. By the 1950s all its capital of £3,000 was paid up.<sup>5</sup> After years of financial struggles, including being sued for not paying for machinery, in 1958 he sold it for one shilling.<sup>6</sup>

Dunsheath formed five more private companies, all similarly undercapitalized and all ultimately unsuccessful.<sup>7</sup> In 1956, two shareholders discovered that all his statements inducing them to acquire interests in one company were 'false and untrue'.<sup>8</sup> In the following year, he was dismissed as manager of a company (of which he had previously been managing director) because of his 'fraudulent misrepresentation' of the cost of converting a building into offices and because he had 'ignored disobeyed or failed to comply with directions and requisitions lawfully made to him' to produce details of the cost of machinery and goods he had supplied.<sup>9</sup> In 1966, the secretary of a third company resigned because he 'was not satisfied with the manner in which it was run' and had 'not received a penny' for his work.<sup>10</sup> One month after being appointed, his new secretary protested that his registration 'was effected without my knowledge or consent' and without a general meeting having appointed him. He described Dunsheath's actions as 'high-handed and arrogant' and 'extremely questionable, and I would go as far as to say illegal', as he had 'no doubt' was the case in all his companies.<sup>11</sup> Such was the businessman who would attempt to revive mining at Tui.

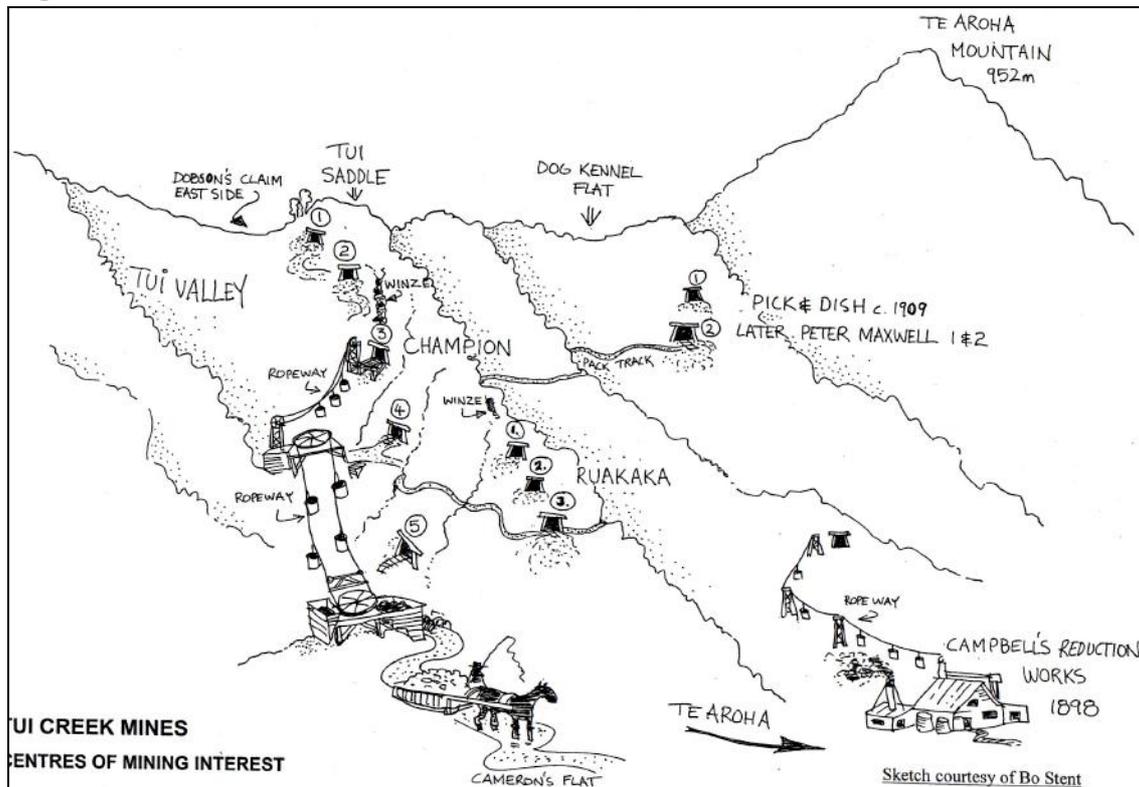
Dunsheath had qualified as a mechanical and metallurgical engineer at Sheffield University, but although claiming 'experience in Mining' admitted he had 'no degrees'

in it.<sup>12</sup> His first direct involvement in mining was in December 1931, when he tried to have a miner's cinnabar license forfeited for non-working.<sup>13</sup> A year later he informed the Mines Department that his company had 'already assisted a number of mining parties with Plant' and asked to be put in touch with others, 'as we are prepared to give assistance and share the responsibilities'. It was 'rather inclined to give greater facilities to reliable groups of Gold Miners' provided it secured 'a recompense in the event of success'.<sup>14</sup> In 1935 he held 50 shares in a private Coromandel mining company that wound up almost immediately.<sup>15</sup> And that comprised all his experience with mining.

### Plans for the Tui mines

Mining in the Tui portion of the Te Aroha Mining District [Fig. 1] had ceased by the late nineteenth century, after which time only desultory prospecting took place until Dunsheath, encouraged by over-optimistic statements made by earlier prospectors, turned his attention to it in 1948.<sup>16</sup> In July 1948, the Te Aroha newspaper, under the heading 'Big Development Possible', reported his plans to supply all New Zealand's lead requirements by producing 4,000 tons<sup>17</sup> annually, his claim that 'the government was anxious for the company to reach the productive stage', and his expectation of creating 100 jobs.<sup>18</sup> One month later he claimed to have 'sufficient capital and adequate plant available' and therefore would not be asking the public for funds.<sup>19</sup>

Figure 1: Tui Creek Mines.



Source: Bo Stent, 'Tui Creek Mines: Centres of Mining Interest', in Kevin Wells, *The Noble Aroha: Te Aroha Mountain: Celebrating Te Aroha 150 Years (1880-2005)*, Te Aroha, 2005, p. 59. Published with permission of the author.

In late 1949, after having done some surface prospecting, Dunsheath planned to extend the lowest level (No. 4) and, should this be 'reasonably successful', to drive a

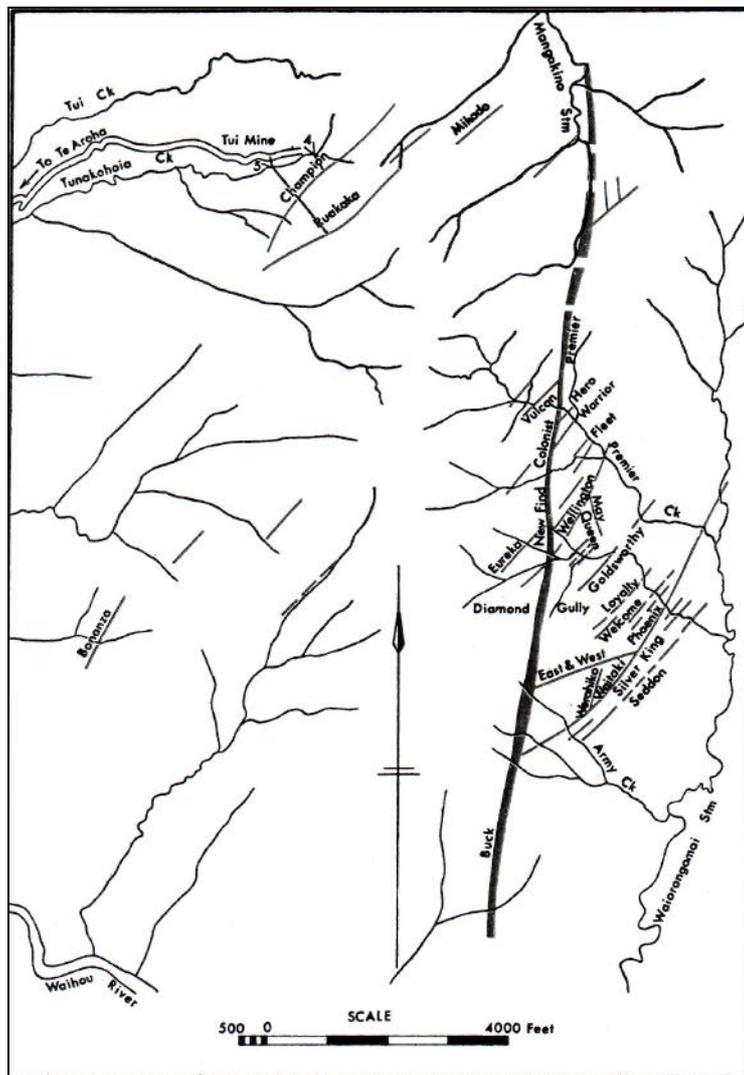
new level about 200 feet below it.<sup>20</sup> By the following February, instead of (in his opinion) wasting money reopening old drives, he informed the mines department of his intention to drive 1,800 feet in this new crosscut (No. 5) to cut six or seven reefs, 'the existence of which we have more or less established on the surface'.<sup>21</sup>

In 1950, Dunsheath claimed to be 'putting my whole time into' reopening the Tui mines, assuring the warden that he wanted to develop them to benefit New Zealand.<sup>22</sup> Although assays revealed only miniscule amounts of gold, he claimed to have found 'large deposits' of lead, zinc, copper, silver and gold and to be 'unconcerned' about whether he made any money at all out of this Scheme, to which he was 'giving every possible support in time, thought and finance'.<sup>23</sup>

### Concerns about pollution

One of Dunsheath's first hurdles was to allay fears about polluting the town's water supply, obtained in large part from the Tui Stream<sup>24</sup> [Fig. 2]

**Figure 2:** *Location of lodes at Tui and Waiorongomai along with water catchment Area at Tui Creek.*



Source: Based on map by John Henderson & John Arthur Bartrum, *The Geology of the Aroha Subdivision*, Hauraki, Wellington, 1913, with levels 4 and 5 of the Tui mines as driven to Ruakaka lode by Norpac in

late 1960s, added by Alistair Isdale, in Gordon Williams, *Economic Geology of New Zealand*, Melbourne, 1965, p. 121.

The borough's engineer argued that 'a pure water supply was probably of more value to the residents of Te Aroha than all the mining, past and future'.<sup>25</sup> In response to these concerns by a council lacking either the funds or the knowledge to cope with such pollution, Dunsheath made assurances that he would not contaminate the water and that the 'modern method' to be used in his proposed smelter would not produce harmful fumes.<sup>26</sup> At the warden's court hearing held in August 1948 to consider his application to prospect 100 acres, the council claimed that water pollution was certain, lead poisoning was possible, and avoiding these threats would cost far more than the Borough could afford. It was viewed as a question of the health of the community versus the wealth of a few. The warden believed 'a community had either to progress or sit down and die', and, as he considered the evidence 'very weak', granted the license.<sup>27</sup> Because of continuing concerns, the Mines Department required Dunsheath to provide adequate sanitation and to chlorinate all water entering the Tui Stream.<sup>28</sup>

Because of more delays caused by health concerns, Dunsheath complained of losing money by paying men who were not able to mine.<sup>29</sup> Not until April 1949 was the site inspected by officials, who decided that the borough should obtain an automatic chlorinating plant.<sup>30</sup> The mining inspector, Edward John Scoble, believed diamond drilling would avoid pollution, and recommended that the town no longer take water from the Tui Stream. In addition, he did not want a smelting plant erected 'as it would cause the destruction of all forest in the vicinity. Instead, the concentrates could be shipped to Australia for treatment'.<sup>31</sup> In November, the council required Dunsheath to pay 'all costs and expenses in connection with Chlorination, Filtration and any other treatment required'.<sup>32</sup> Reluctantly, he installed a temporary chlorination plant at the reservoir below the mines, but as this was ineffective and the borough's plant was unsatisfactory it was agreed that his company and the borough should share the cost of a modern plant.<sup>33</sup> So reluctant was the company to meet the cost of chlorination that in 1950 it failed to pay four accounts and by August 1952 owed £294 0s 2d, and continued to ignore all subsequent accounts.<sup>34</sup>

### **What officials thought of the prospects**

In August 1948, the under-secretary, Cecil Henry Benney, noted that 'little or no prospecting work has been done despite the exaggerated claims' made, and, in noting evidence that lead could not be produced economically, expected Scoble's report on Dunsheath's plans would be 'most unpromising'.<sup>35</sup> Scoble reported that tests made before Dunsheath became involved had failed to find good ore and that claims of past success were unsubstantiated. Scoble had 'no faith' in his own assays of two samples 'as the stone was undoubtedly selected by somebody in the past', using picked stone to produce a misleading, and fraudulent, indication of good gold values. Although he believed the ground was worth testing, he was not prepared to predict its value until the lode had been sampled at depth.<sup>36</sup> A senior departmental engineer, Robert Faulks Landreth, likewise doubted 'past extravagant claims', but, with zinc and copper fetching good prices and both being in short supply, prospecting was worth doing, although lack of worthwhile information' made assessing the potential difficult. He also believed that any suggestion of producing 4,000 tons of lead per year and satisfying New Zealand's

requirements was ‘fantastic’ at that stage.<sup>37</sup> In the light of this advice, Benney decided that prospecting ‘vigorously’ was worthwhile.<sup>38</sup>

In December 1949, after taking five more samples, Scoble reported that although values and reef widths were ‘somewhat erratic’, the ‘venture might be classed as a reasonable prospect’.<sup>39</sup> In September 1950, Benney thought Dunsheath should have developed the old workings where lodes had been struck rather than opening a new level, and if this could not be financed the company ‘should never have started’. Because ‘a large-scale plan showing all outcrops, workings, samples, assay values & contours’ was ‘basic to intelligent prospecting’, if one had not been prepared the work ‘must be regarded as ill considered’. As for Dunsheath’s request for a larger prospecting area, Benney preferred thorough prospecting of their ground before tying up surrounding country.<sup>40</sup> But ‘if the reefing system with satisfactory values does live at depth and quantity can be established, it would be a most valuable national discovery’.<sup>41</sup> Privately, the minister, William Sullivan, warned that the outcome of this ‘legitimate mining venture’ was highly speculative.<sup>42</sup> By 1951, Benney considered there was ‘a 1000 to 1 chance against’ finding payable quantities of lead.<sup>43</sup>

When Dunsheath claimed that, ‘owing to the leached, broken and inaccessible nature of surface exposures, extensive surface sampling’ was ‘redundant’, officials disagreed: systematic sampling provided ‘invaluable information’.<sup>44</sup> In May 1951, Benney warned Dunsheath that even if the lode had good values ‘a considerable prospecting and development programme still lay ahead’ before its worth could be assessed.<sup>45</sup>

### **The men in charge**

In 1949, Dunsheath claimed to have a ‘good, experienced man’ who, although ‘not a fully qualified mining engineer’, had ‘capacities and knowledge far more useful than some of the men holding paper credentials’.<sup>46</sup> He was Walter Haydn Burton, aged 64.<sup>47</sup> Despite Dunsheath’s claims of him having been ‘in charge of fairly large Shows’ and being ‘a most valuable asset’, Scoble knew he was exaggerating and, although ‘a sound and reliable man’, pointed out that Burton did not have any special mining qualifications,<sup>48</sup> and as he was unable to manage the mine, he was put in charge of surface work.<sup>49</sup>

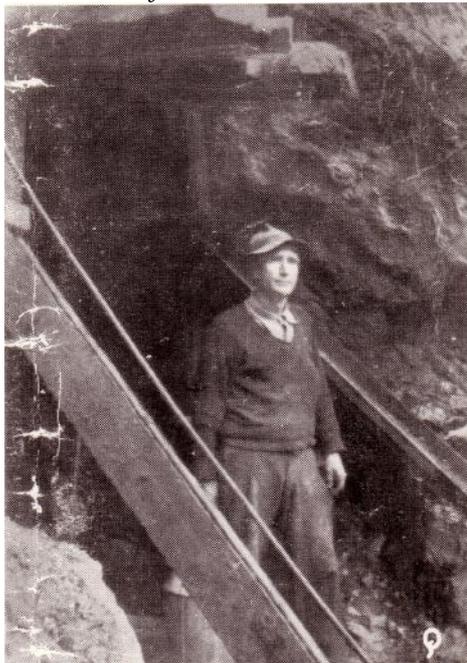
Instead of Burton, James Bert McAra, known to everyone as Bert, was appointed as mine manager in November 1949, when aged 41 [Fig. 3].<sup>50</sup> He had mined at Waihi and in Western Australia, was a certified mine manager, and a member of the Waihi School of Mines’ council.<sup>51</sup> Knowing the Waihi mine would soon close he had left to manage a quarry, but ‘I didn’t care for this work after mining’, so when asked to take a job as mine manager to carry out exploration of the old Tui mining area, he welcomed the chance’.<sup>52</sup>

### **Seeking advice and assistance**

Dunsheath rarely revealed who provided expert advice. For instance, in December 1948 he claimed to have ‘the highest skilled engineers, both mining and geological and sanitary, operating on our behalf, as well as the advice of some of the leading medical men in the Dominion, including some from Wellington’,<sup>53</sup> all unnamed. In August 1949

he claimed to be assisted by ‘excellent technical advisers in Australia and the United Kingdom’, unnamed, who would be ‘supplemented soon’.<sup>54</sup> Even if some of these people existed, without inspecting the ground, obtaining adequate information, and testing the ore (difficult, because the old workings had collapsed), no adviser could provide meaningful assistance. Some advice was found wanting, and in September 1949 Dunsheath complained that ‘we have been extremely disappointed by the unreliable information given by some men’ (unnamed), and the only mining plans he had were ‘by no means correct’.<sup>55</sup>

**Figure 3:** Bert McAra in the portal of No. 5 level, 1950.



Source: Auckland Smelting Company Ltd., Base Metals at Te Aroha', broadsheet, Te Aroha. 1950. J.B. McAra Papers.

In November 1949, when the Waihi School of Mines was asked whether it could supply equipment and materials ‘not immediately in use’, it declined because the request ‘really amounted to establishing a laboratory’, although it promised ‘co-operation towards procuring specific items later’.<sup>56</sup> The director of this school from 1946 to mid-1949, Keith Beatson, ‘strongly recommended’ diamond drilling, but the Mines Department’s drilling superintendent warned this would be too expensive and Beatson’s report was ‘most inaccurate and absolutely valueless’.<sup>57</sup> Curiously, the results of Beatson’s samplings were not provided to McAra, the mining inspector, or the department, and equally curious was that Dunsheath then employed Beatson to produce another report.<sup>58</sup> In February 1950, Dunsheath told the department that diamond drilling had not been overlooked ‘but we have considered the expense and our

present proposal to drive’ No. 5 level was, ‘in the opinion of our Advisers’ (again unnamed), ‘the scheme most likely to get results with a reasonable expense’.<sup>59</sup>

### **Initial developments when forming the Auckland Smelting Company, Tui**

During 1948, prospecting reportedly indicated encouraging prospects.<sup>60</sup> In August, Dunsheath had ‘sufficient plant to start almost immediately’, with just three men, to ‘pick up reef & run along reef’. He would employ another miner when ore was produced, and might drive two more levels with additional men. His proposed smelting works would employ two men.<sup>61</sup> In August 1949 it was announced that his company would spend ‘one to two years analyzing the ore and tracing the path of the seam’, thoroughly testing the ground by tunnels and diamond drilling.<sup>62</sup> By then it employed ‘fully qualified chemists, a certified Mine Manager and Assayer’, and had acquired most of the necessary testing equipment.<sup>63</sup>

According to Dunsheath, originally he had intended ‘to prospect the area with his own funds but he received friendly advice that it would be wiser to collect a group of men willing to risk the cost’.<sup>64</sup> As his financial resources were very limited he had no

choice, and on 19 October 1949 the Auckland Smelting Company was registered with a capital of £10,000, in £1 shares, which both its secretary and government officials considered was inadequate.<sup>65</sup> Its first directors were Thomas Raymond Impey, a paint merchant,<sup>66</sup> Thomas Stewart Littlejohn, managing director of Aluminium Utensils and manager of Metal Products,<sup>67</sup> and Dunsheath, its managing director. Dunsheath claimed 'no professional Company Promoters ever were or are connected with this scheme which has been commented upon most favourably by many Overseas Firms', as usual unspecified.<sup>68</sup> Of the initial 56 ordinary shareholders, only one, a retired miner, had an occupation suggesting any familiarity with mining.<sup>69</sup>

One month after its formation, the company's secretary wrote that 'the capital would have to be increased as it was not nearly big enough'.<sup>70</sup> One month later, Scoble noted that driving No. 5 level would cost 'considerably more' than the £7,000 capital he believed had been subscribed.<sup>71</sup> By the following February, Dunsheath stated that mining plant worth up to £3,000 had been purchased (presumably from Dunsheath Machinery), a 'first-class Assay Office and Laboratory' had been set up, and he personally had spent 'well over £2,000'. To drive No. 5 justified 'an increase of Capital'.<sup>72</sup> Landreth estimated the cost of initial development was over £20,000, beyond its capacity.<sup>73</sup>

To entice investors, in 1950 a broadsheet containing 17 photographs of the initial work was published.<sup>74</sup> By March that year, 52 new shareholders had taken up shares, and 9,775 shares had been allotted.<sup>75</sup> With the capital doubled to £20,000, 15 new shareholders joined during the remainder of 1950, none having any connection with mining.<sup>76</sup> In August, a director said that although the capital was 'insufficient to carry out the development programme' there was 'some talk of mining sulphides and shipping them overseas in crude form to finance developments', which to Landreth was an 'obvious' way to meet costs.<sup>77</sup> By the end of the year, 11,700 shares had been allocated, and calls had raised £11,637 10s.<sup>78</sup> By the following June, 20 new shareholders had taken up 2,850 shares.<sup>79</sup>

### **Seeking assistance**

From the start, Dunsheath sought the Mines Department's assistance. In 1948, after it provided plans of earlier mining, he asked for a diamond drill plant.<sup>80</sup> After his arrangement with a drilling contractor fell through, in the following July he renewed his request, but was told no drills were available.<sup>81</sup> One month later, in announcing his latest plan to reopen old adits, he requested technical advice from the department and the Geological Survey, to be told it would be given once these were reopened and plans produced.<sup>82</sup> Not until September 1951 did he request a copy of the 1932 Geological Survey's report on the mountain, which would have provided useful basic information; although it did not confirm his hopes about base metals, he found 'at least one helpful observation', unspecified, 'which I have already taken steps to work upon'.<sup>83</sup> In the following year he obtained a geophysicist's report, which did not provide any new information.<sup>84</sup>

In November 1949, Dunsheath asked whether the department would meet the cost of constructing a road to the mine site so that the company could devote its resources to its mine.<sup>85</sup> Two weeks later, he told William Sullivan, the Minister, that assistance

would avoid a three-hour walk.<sup>86</sup> Having taken samples and discussed the company's plans, Scoble recommended providing £300 on a £1 for £1 basis.<sup>87</sup> Dunsheath responded by requesting 'not less than £1,000' of the estimated £1,200 cost, for his company had not 'realized that the work would be so big and costly as it has now proved to be'.<sup>88</sup> Despite not wanting to 'be jockeyed into the position of being partners in this enterprise', Landreth recommended assisting because the area was worth prospecting,<sup>89</sup> but Sullivan was not convinced, noting that the company was so under-capitalized that it was seeking a grant to form its access road. 'How then can it possibly make a success of prospecting the area', and he feared becoming committed to providing further assistance. 'I think it best to hold the application over for 6 months, review then and see if the Coy is making any real progress'.<sup>90</sup>

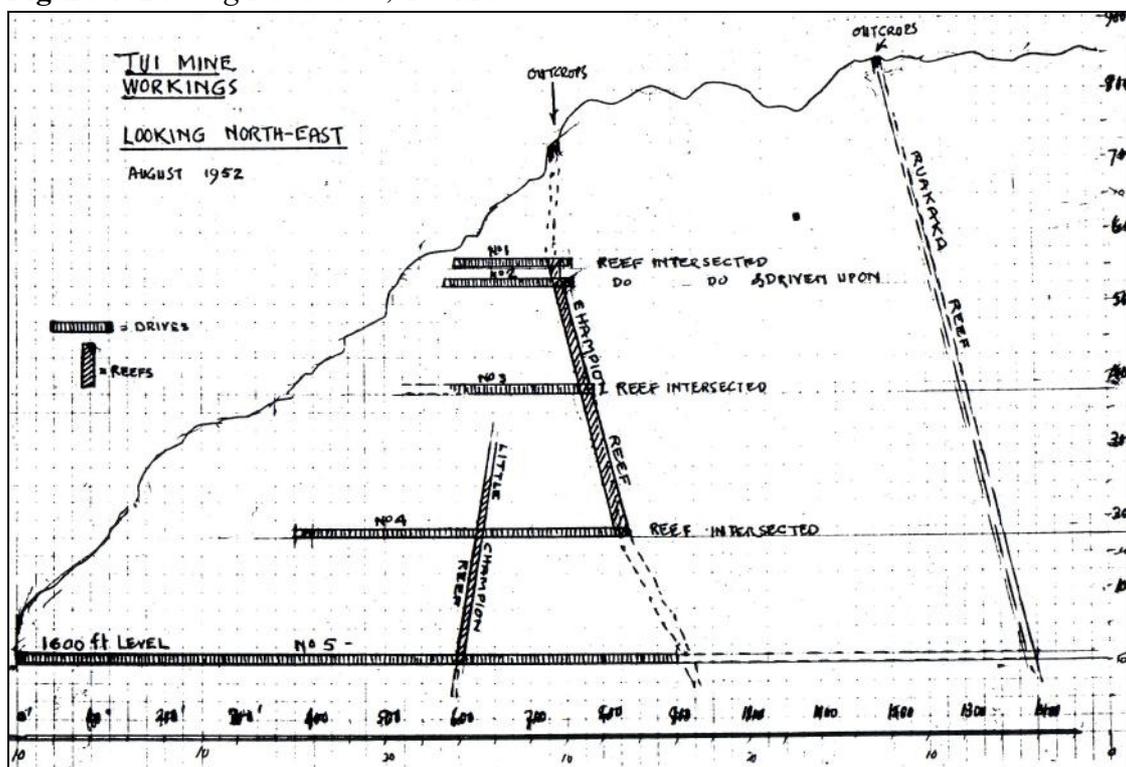
In February 1950, Dunsheath offered to prospect the whole mountain, an offer dependent upon receiving financial assistance.<sup>91</sup> Five months later he again sought approval for this prospecting and for priority in mining it, assuring Benney that this 'privilege will be by no means abused but will be prosecuted with the utmost enthusiasm'. He was told that permission to prospect up to 8,000 acres could not be granted 'without statutory conditions as to employment of labour' which his company could not afford.<sup>92</sup>

After Benney and Scoble visited in August, Dunsheath 'respectfully' requested £1,000 towards the road (which had cost over £1,500 so far) 'to enable us to conserve every penny of our finance for underground Work'. As driving No. 5 cost £5 per foot, he requested 'a substantial Subsidy' to driving the 800 feet, reminding Benney that discovering payable base metal mines was 'of the utmost National importance'.<sup>93</sup> Benney, who told Sullivan there seemed to be 'a genuine mining prospect and so far the money has been wisely spent in a workmanlike manner', was willing to consider assistance for the road, but Scoble opposed assisting before a proper survey was produced and the values of samples taken by McAra were known.<sup>94</sup> Landreth agreed that a survey of outcrops and old workings should have been taken at the start, but 'as useful information should be obtained' from driving No. 5 he suggested granting £1,000 towards its cost. Being uncertain whether the company could afford to do the work even with this grant, he recommended providing £2 10s per foot for driving 400 feet after first attaining 400 feet; this recommendation was accepted.<sup>95</sup> Although Dunsheath was grateful, yet again he requested assistance towards the cost of the road, but Sullivan preferred to subsidize 'work ahead', not 'past work'.<sup>96</sup>

In February 1951, when the company sought its grant immediately, even though No 5 was only in 300 feet, Landreth commented that it was 'running true to type in making further demands upon the Government for assistance to keep going', but because it was doing 'useful work on a genuine venture' it would be paid £2 per foot for another 200 feet, and granted £500 towards the road.<sup>97</sup> Four months later, Eric Henry Halstead, the company's auditor, who was also a member of the governing party,<sup>98</sup> said the company's finances were 'now desperate as they are at a loss to meet this week's wages bill' and suggested the department loan it £2,000, after which an 'additional £5,000 could be raised from some of his friends who realized that it was a gamble' but would permit completing No. 5. The department agreed to provide an interest-free loan of £2,000.<sup>99</sup>

In November, when the company proposed to spend £39,275 on large-scale developments, its requests had ballooned: a £25,000 interest-free loan, a subsidy of £7 per foot towards the cost of driving, now claimed to be vastly increased to £20 per foot, the loan of diamond drilling equipment, and a grant of £5,000 towards the estimated drilling cost of £13,500.<sup>100</sup> Officials considered ‘some measure of financial assistance’ was merited because information about ‘the lode in depth’ and an estimate of its total metal content ‘would be of value’, but noted the company’s tendency ‘to expect that the major portion of the finance should be contributed by the Government, and apparently the extensive and ambitious prospecting programme is based on such an expectation’. In their opinion there was ‘little justification’ for this programme ‘and certainly none for the Government to contribute all but a small fraction of the necessary finance’. To encourage the completion of No. 5 crosscut and driving 400 feet along the lode in both directions, they recommended that, in addition to the loan of £2,000, the subsidy per foot be raised from £2 to £3, to a maximum of 800 feet.<sup>101</sup> The directors responded by expressing their ‘keen disappointment’, claiming to have spent £30,000 whereas the government had provided only £900; in fact, £1,080 had been received, and the offer of a £2,000 interest-free loan was yet to be taken up.<sup>102</sup> When asked to provide ‘substantial aid’ if a payable lode was struck, Benney noted that ‘this project was never designed or carried on on the basis of the State providing a substantial, or any, part of the capital’; furthermore, the company ‘would not need financial aid from the State should good payable ore be struck and proved to persist in No. 5 Level’.<sup>103</sup> In July 1952, the company took up the offer of the £2,000 loan and requested more subsidies, unsuccessfully.<sup>104</sup>

**Figure 4:** *Driving No. 5 level, Tui Mine.*

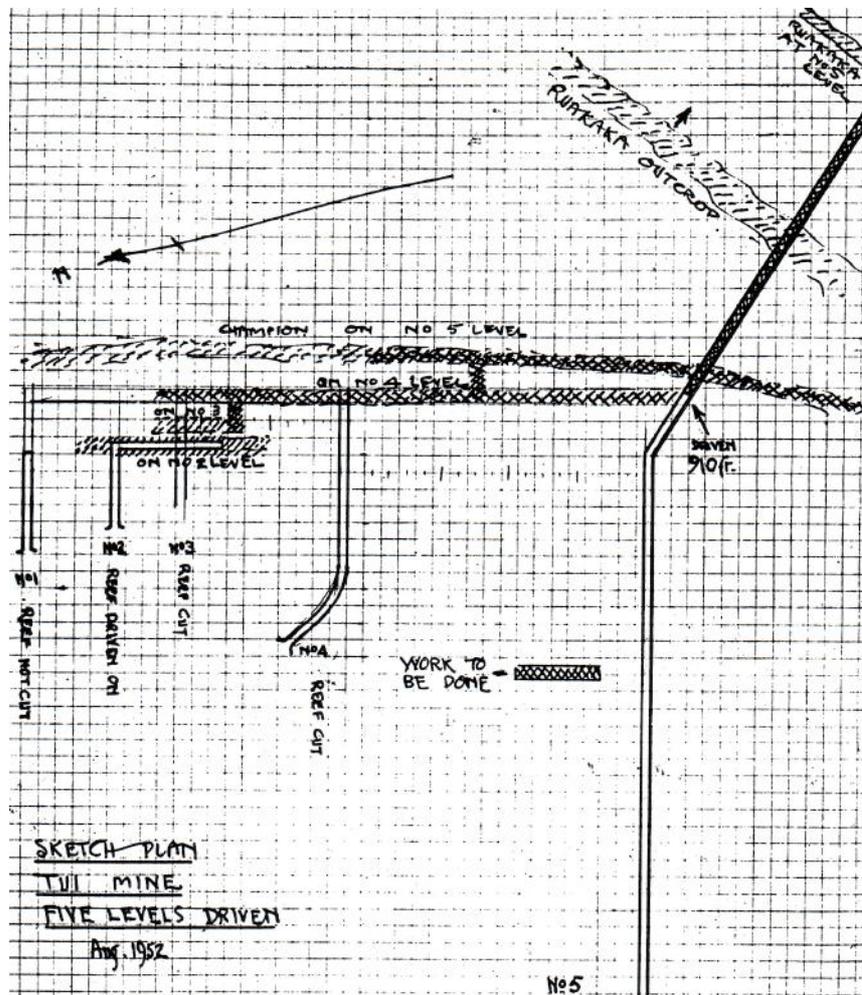


Source: [J.B. McAra], 'Tui Mine Workings: Looking North-East' (August 1952), Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 2, ANZ-W.

### Driving No. 5 level

McAra had recommended driving No. 5 'to intersect the Champion reef at right-angles about 150 feet below ... No. 4 level [Fig. 4], but about 500 feet or so to the south of it. This was central to both reefs so that after cutting the Champion the crosscut could be turned a little to cut the Ruakaka at right-angles', enabling him to discover whether the reefs 'were any good at that depth. I always contended that if they weren't any good at that depth there was no good bothering about it at all'.<sup>105</sup> Commenced in July 1950, it required 'heavy drilling equipment' to drive through hard rock, but the miners experienced 'considerable difficulties' with 'unsuitable and second-hand machinery',<sup>106</sup> presumably provided by Dunsheath Machinery. Initially the driller and his mate managed '4 feet, or more, per day' in their shift.<sup>107</sup> By September ten feet per week was being driven, and by the following January it was in 200 feet.<sup>108</sup> The main reason for slow progress was 'the scarcity of good miners'.<sup>109</sup> By August it had reached 455 feet and was 'being pushed forward with all possible speed'.<sup>110</sup>

**Figure 5:** Sketch Plan, Heading to the Ruakaka reef.



Source: [J.B. McAra], 'Sketch Plan, Tui Mine, Five Levels Driven' (August 1952), Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 2, ANZ-W.

In February 1952, after 560 feet had been driven officials noted that progress had been 'painfully slow due to difficulty in securing labour'.<sup>111</sup> By the end of March, the company had obtained experienced Waihi miners to work two shifts to complete this

level and drive along the exposed face in No. 4.<sup>112</sup> By early May it was in 700 feet and had struck a 12-foot reef, possibly the Champion or ‘a portion which has split off from same’.<sup>113</sup> Having changed direction towards the Ruakaka reef as recommended by McAra [Fig. 5], after it reached nearly 1,000 feet he resigned and, as one miner who worked there in the 1960s recalled, ‘unfortunately the management ... decided that he was going in the wrong direction, and they had to turn back. So you had this dog leg in the mine’.<sup>114</sup> It was subsequently realized that it had indeed cut through the Champion.<sup>115</sup> Despite Dunsheath’s claims of cutting small reefs in promising ground,<sup>116</sup> reverting to driving ‘parallel to the original’ direction, was, as McAra later commented, ‘blind stabbing’. When a later company took over the ground, it found McAra had been correct: ‘Well, I couldn’t go wrong. ... I’d surveyed the thing and it was all compass work and the needle couldn’t tell lies, could it? There it was at right angles to that bearing, it had to be’.<sup>117</sup>

### **1951: big plans**

McAra and Burton visited Waiorongomai in January 1951 and were ‘very much impressed’ with the possibilities of ‘opening up a large low grade gold-silver mine’, and in May the company purchased the interests of the only man holding ground there.<sup>118</sup> Samples were taken from other abandoned underground workings.<sup>119</sup> From 30 September to 7 October, J.M. Warrington, of G.H. and J. Watson of Sydney, the company’s mining and consulting engineers,<sup>120</sup> inspected, and although unable to ‘form a precise opinion of the value of the deposits exposed’, recommended large scale developments to establish their value, including ‘a minimum of 4,000 feet of openings and up to 6,000 feet of diamond drillings’, with 4,000 samples being taken. All this would take two years, would cost £100,880, and require ‘a substantial increase of existing staff at the mine to allow the investigation to go forward on a scientific basis’.<sup>121</sup> Dunsheath claimed Warrington considered the area ‘the most interesting one he has ever inspected’ and could justify erecting a plant to treat 50,000 tons a month.<sup>122</sup>

Arguing that mining would be uneconomic unless ‘undertaken over a very large and extensive area’, the company, which in October claimed to have ‘spent £30,000 on prospecting and exploratory work’ and opening up nearly 3,000 feet of tunnels, wanted to prospect another 2,000 acres. Dunsheath said ‘the idea of a small scheme had been turned down on economic grounds. To be successful the scheme had to be an extensive one’; he was granted 1,800 acres.<sup>123</sup> Expensive plans were contemplated for working the Tui and Waiorongomai mines together.<sup>124</sup> When officials visited in January, they recommended ignoring Waiorongomai and regretted that instead of driving in levels 3 and 4 all development had concentrated on No. 5. Although the possible quantity of ore was ‘sufficiently attractive to justify a prospecting programme’, the result was ‘highly speculative’, and ‘from the information available there is little justification for embarking on the large scale intensive programme’ proposed by Warrington.<sup>125</sup>

### **Increasing the capital in 1951**

As the company was struggling to obtain the extra £10,000 capital needed,<sup>126</sup> it sought the assistance of prominent businessman Sir James Fletcher,<sup>127</sup> who obtained departmental approval for increasing the capital.<sup>128</sup> In May 1951 Dunsheath produced

an eight-page 'information sheet' that tempted investors with several dramatic but unsupported statements. It claimed that the Waihi Company, and unspecified 'English, Continental, American and Australian Companies', were interested in the ground and that 'certain sound Mining Geologists have stated that Te Aroha is the "Gold Field of the Future."' This is more than likely now it is known beyond doubt that the Refractory or Complex Ore located there exists in massive formation' (But he did not say it was payable). The company anticipated erecting a modern treatment plant 'capable of handling 100 tons or more per day for say a minimum of 20 years', and claimed, wrongly, that in the nineteenth century miners had successfully extracted 'free' gold.

DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS we have had this Area prospected and surveyed by Miners, Geologists, Mining Engineers, [and] Prospectors, every one of whom has expressed himself as being absolutely astounded at what they have seen and most enthusiastic to get the growth removed from the surface and do all that is necessary to open up the Area in a businesslike way....

MR SCOBLE THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR OF MINES, Waihi, periodically visits our Area and has reported persistently most favourably upon the great prospects of success. Mr Benney the Under-Secretary of Mines recently made a special trip to investigate and he reported most favourably upon the Area and placed on record his utmost surprise at the enormous amount of work we have accomplished in a period of twelve months without soliciting any financial or other assistance from the Government.

(Not only were the numbers and enthusiasm of visitors exaggerated and officials' views cited inaccurately without their permission but the company regularly requested assistance). The minister, apparently spontaneously, had 'decided to make a cash grant to the Company' of an amount which 'runs well into four figures' (it was £1,500). Alarming details were given of a world shortage of metals along with claims that some of its ore contained 70 per cent of pure lead, despite appended assays revealing that only once was the amount as high as 69.8 per cent. It anticipated the 'present Exploration Company' forming 'a substantial Company to build the Treatment Plant and carry out the mining, milling and refining, etc'. Two pages of this 'information sheet' reproduced some of the 'very large number' of assays 'taken at random from our Assay Book' (they were not random, and unintentionally revealed highly erratic results, and other assays, appended later, were also erratic and, mostly, poor).<sup>129</sup>

Dunsheath informed Benney that Fletcher could 'secure substantial contributions from Australia, England and the United States' for a new company and mentioned other potential investors with access to large funds.<sup>130</sup> His letter crossed with one from Benney protesting at his and Scoble's views being cited and requiring their removal. 'It has been the invariable policy of the Mines Department not to express judgment on prospective ventures of a speculative nature', and their statements had not been as positive as claimed.<sup>131</sup> Scoble told Benney he was sure he had 'not said anything to Mr Dunsheath that might be construed as specially favourable to his venture. In fact, I can only recall meeting him at the mine once'.<sup>132</sup>

Later in May, Dunsheath asked whether the government would assist to float the new company either by granting £25 per ton for the first 1,000 tons treated or by subscribing £50,000 towards its capital of £500,000.<sup>133</sup> This request was ignored, although Dunsheath later falsely assured Te Aroha residents that ‘both Labour and National governments have sincerely encouraged our prodigious exploration scheme’ and had ‘financially backed our efforts in no uncertain manner’.<sup>134</sup> By late August, 20,100 of the now 30,000 shares had been taken up; calls had produced £18,925, with £1,175 outstanding.<sup>135</sup> The company’s capital would be increased to £50,000 before transforming it ‘into a Development Company’.<sup>136</sup> After having spent £12,007 10s since its formation, contact had been made ‘with substantial authorities who have evinced considerable interest’ in the ground ‘and in due course the Directors propose to negotiate with these people’,<sup>137</sup> never identified.

By July 1952, £50,000 had been subscribed; as always, no shareholders were connected with mining.<sup>138</sup> In December, it was decided to increase the capital to £75,000, but by the following July only 2,400 shares had been allotted, a ‘most disappointing’ results which the directors admitted had ‘produced a critical stage in the progress of the Company’.<sup>139</sup>

### **Losing a mine manager**

Dunsheath always kept a close eye on McAra’s work, for instance in July 1950 ringing him ‘seven days a week and sometimes twice in one day’.<sup>140</sup> In June 1952, in writing to Landreth he compared Burton, ‘a most valuable asset’, with McAra, who, after making ‘a number of errors of judgment’ (unspecified), had been restricted to managing the underground workings while Burton controlled all the surface work. He described McAra as

an ambitious man and with proper supervision and guidance everything went very satisfactorily. However, for some reason he sent a personal letter to the Chairman of Directors, Sir James Fletcher, and complained regarding the instructions given by myself as Managing Director. Sir James, unwittingly, fell into a trap and found that he and I had given contrary orders to McAra. McAra then adopted the attitude that he should only take instructions from the Managing Director provided they were confirmed by the Secretary in writing.

Fletcher had asked Burton to work under McAra, but ‘poor McAra, unfortunately, has given so many foolish orders that Burton decided he could no longer work alongside McAra, and decided to leave the job and take a little holiday’. As the directors required a mine manager who could also do surface and clerical work, Dunsheath wanted Burton in this role. He claimed McAra was unable to control the drillers, ‘who completely ignore his orders and carry out the work just as they like’, making drilling excessively expensive. As he had ‘no doubt’ McAra would leave, he sought Landreth’s opinion of Burton, who was ‘an extremely hard worker at all times and possesses great wisdom and understanding when it comes to matters of mining and engineering’.<sup>141</sup> In response to this list of accusations, Landreth expressed surprise, as he had believed the McAra and Burton had ‘co-operated very well’, and considered ‘the general lay-out and method of working was adequate and workmanlike, but not extravagant’. As for Burton,

not being certified ruled him out as McAra's replacement.<sup>142</sup> Dunsheath then informed Benney about McAra's belief (which, he did not admit, had caused Dunsheath to attack him) that the reef cut at 600 feet in No. 5 was the Champion and his recommendation to turn the drive 40 degrees to the south to be at right-angles to the Ruakaka reef.<sup>143</sup> Two weeks later, Dunsheath renewed his attack, alleging McAra lacked sufficient experience in the general handling of the Mine requirements, Timber, Roads, Machinery, etc, to be able to make a right decision, and had no 'experience with road making, cutting timber, driving trucks, putting in foundations', and other skills irrelevant to managing the mine.<sup>144</sup>

At the beginning of September, McAra resigned to take up a job in Australia.<sup>145</sup> Having indeed cut the Champion in No. 5, he had told Dunsheath that its 'scant mineralization' meant 'the mine would not have a future'.<sup>146</sup> Dunsheath's response was to ask him to send samples to test 'for propaganda purposes'. Dunsheath 'and his henchmen had gone up to the mine and taken these samples and they wanted me to send them away as genuine samples. "No, I must take the samples myself, you can't do that." Oh, well, of course, that was the start of an argument and so far as I was concerned that was the finish', for his reputation was at stake.<sup>147</sup> He informed Fletcher of his reason for resigning and was complemented on his honesty.<sup>148</sup> Dunsheath's original choice, Burton, became 'Acting Manager'.<sup>149</sup>

Perhaps Dunsheath belatedly appreciated McAra's principled stance, for there is no evidence of his using misleading samples to raise capital; but in the absence of the company's records this merely means the Mines Department was not aware of his doing so. Four years later McAra would return as the mining inspector: so much for his alleged incompetence.<sup>150</sup>

### **The final phase**

In June 1952, the director of the Otago School of Mines, Gordon Williams, advised that the lode would be of lower value at depth and would not produce the 12,000 tons required annually for 15 years. As large-scale mining was impossible, profits would be low, meaning forming 'an operating company with, perhaps £100,000 capital' was 'not yet justified'. He doubted that, even if the reef struck in No. 5 was the Champion, it 'alone would make a mine', and concluded that 'unless 150,000 tons of good grade ore are available, there is little hope of operating with financial success'.<sup>151</sup>

Instead of shareholders being given Williams' views, Dunsheath assured them that as Warrington was 'full of enthusiasm' for the reefs and was 'most favourably impressed with the magnitude and chances of success', the company would carry out the first part of his 'substantial programme of further development'. It had received another government subsidy 'to cover the additional work' and an offer of 'an interest free loan for ten years' had been accepted. This 'further subsidy' was a continuation of the one granted to complete No. 5 and the amount of the loan was not indicated, probably because it was for only £2,000. Dunsheath further expected to strike the Champion lode in another 100 feet. (McAra had explained that had already done so) and they would drive on the Champion in No. 4, and had made 'tentative arrangements' to test its complex ore. The directors were 'convinced that we shall be able to do what we embarked upon, and see results of this Treatment on a Pilot Plant Scale within a few

months'. Their 'extensive scheme of development' was 'already moving well ahead' with 'the benefit of advice and help from leading Technical men comprising both Geologists and Mining Engineers', unnamed, and had received 'the utmost co-operation and encouragement'.<sup>152</sup> He failed to mention that the company could afford to employ only seven men.<sup>153</sup>

At this annual meeting, Dunsheath removed the other two original directors to ensure his control of the company, prompting Fletcher to resign.<sup>154</sup> Two months later, as all its capital was paid up, the government was asked to provide £21,000 to enable it to carry out the proposed developments.<sup>155</sup> Landreth advised that, as assays of the Champion lode in No. 5 revealed values 'too low to be of economic value', no additional assistance should be considered until the original subsidy was expended driving on it.<sup>156</sup> He considered the only realistic course was to cease driving No. 5 towards the Ruakaka, instead driving in both directions along the Champion 'so as to adequately test the reef'. If this did not improve it must 'be assumed that there is no possibility of developing ore at this level' and there was insufficient 'overall tonnage to justify the erection of a treatment plant'.<sup>157</sup> The company was informed that further assistance would not be considered until after the current, subsidized, work was completed.<sup>158</sup>

Over two months later, Benney told Dunsheath he was 'disappointed' not to have been told the outcome of extending No. 5 to 1,000 feet and requested confirmation that, not having cut another reef, the company would now drive on the Champion.<sup>159</sup> Unusually, it took almost two months for Dunsheath explain that driving had ceased at 1,155 feet, despite, he claimed, the stone being 'favourable and mineralised'. Having passed the surveyor's 'anticipated reef position' in No. 5, they would now drive in No. 4, for which he requested a subsidy.<sup>160</sup> He was reminded that officials had warned him that if extending No. 5 to 1,000 feet 'did not disclose the existence of another reef, no useful purpose would be served in the extension of No. 4 crosscut in search of the same reef'. The department believed 'an adequate test of the possibilities' could not be made 'until the reef has been driven upon for some distance' and 'systematically sampled and assayed'; it would pay the subsidy when this work was completed, but no subsidy had been promised for No. 4.<sup>161</sup>

A May 1953 newspaper article about an American company being interested because germanium had been discovered and about plans to form a larger company prompted Landreth to comment that Dunsheath was 'apparently doing some publicity work to help sale of shares and has quoted Government assistance as a selling point'.<sup>162</sup> In the following month, as the company was 'financially embarrassed' and its attempts to raise more capital had been 'disappointing', the directors 'lacked the money to tide them over. A contract had been let for driving 500 feet, and they were liable to be sued if they broke it'. A request for a loan of £1,000 was refused because the 'sharp decline in the price of lead and zinc' had accentuated the company's poor prospects.<sup>163</sup> By then only two men were working underground, in No 4, and two on the surface. As the Champion was barren in No. 5 and the only possibility of finding good ore was in the northern end of No. 4, there was 'no prospect of developing sufficient tonnage', and with no overseas market for the ore the department considered that, as its subsidy had

provided the geological information it wanted, no further development was warranted.<sup>164</sup>

By early July, all work had ceased and the mine was on ‘care and maintenance’.<sup>165</sup> Misleadingly, at the annual meeting shareholders were informed that in No. 5 all the reefs cut justified driving upon ‘as soon as possible’ and that it appeared to be reaching another one. Yet instead of continuing this drive, the miners had been transferred to No. 4, from which two tons had been sent overseas for testing, and it was planned to rise from No. 4 to No. 3. But the company was ‘at the crossroads. Despite the full confidence of the Directors, it is not possible to carry on further without funds’.<sup>166</sup> Not all directors may have been as confident as claimed, as one had already resigned – and Dunsheath resigned at this meeting, in unrecorded circumstances, and the two directors he had edged out earlier returned to the board.<sup>167</sup> Any remaining optimism would have been dashed when a Japanese firm, having tested the ore, expressed ‘no interest’ in purchasing it.<sup>168</sup> Instead of renewing mining, five years were spent trying to find an overseas buyer for the company and in delaying repayment of the government’s loan.<sup>169</sup> Yet again the government was asked to assist, this time with preparing the property for an American company’s inspection, a request rejected because this visit (which never eventuated) was ‘merely flogging a dead horse’.<sup>170</sup> Dunsheath briefly rejoined the board, and after resigning again, once more for unrecorded reasons, both the company and he personally were sued for money owing.<sup>171</sup> After meeting as many of its liabilities as funds permitted, in December 1958 the company applied to be struck off the register.<sup>172</sup>

### **Post Mortem**

In 1952, McAra told the Te Aroha Rotary Club that a mine had to be ‘thoroughly surveyed, tested and proven before the next stage of development was embarked upon’, which could take years until it was certain the mine would be ‘a sound, payable proposition’ lasting for about 25 years.<sup>173</sup> In 1985, looking back over the history of this and similar companies, he commented that prospecting companies were ‘high risk investments’ which needed to discover sufficient ore to permit at least ten years of mining ‘otherwise your capital cost of putting a plant in wouldn’t be covered’. In the case of this company, it wasn’t ‘strong enough’ even to complete No. 5: ‘they ran out of funds and that was it’.<sup>174</sup>

The Auckland Smelting Company’s career illustrated several aspects of how such under-capitalized companies attempted to keep afloat:

- by exaggerating the value of the ore, using as proof claims made by earlier prospectors who had neglected to develop the allegedly valuable deposits;
- by ignoring assays made by officials and others which proved earlier samples were unrepresentative;
- by ignoring the fact that its assays were erratic and citing the highest result as if it was the average value;
- by claiming, without producing evidence, that a large but unspecified number of unnamed experts supported the venture;

- by implying that underground tests had been made when the collapse of the old workings had prevented testing;
- by greatly exaggerating the size of the ore reserve;
- by deliberately misleading officials, shareholders, and the public by making false claims about the prospects and by failing to produce reports giving much less positive assessments;
- by exaggerating the amount of prospecting done;
- by exaggerating the interest of overseas companies in purchasing the mine and its output;
- by claiming that extracting the ore would be crucial for the national economy;
- by exaggerating the positive impact of the mine on the local economy;
- by obtaining support from local residents, the council, and the local newspaper through exaggeration and misinformation;
- by claiming to have the backing of the government and the Mines Department;
- by seeking ever-increasing government financial assistance;
- by claiming that, far from requesting financial assistance, this was offered spontaneously, and by implying much more was offered than was the case;
- and by using a man associated with the company who was also a member of the governing party to seek financial assistance from the government.

None of these methods were unique to this company, which was yet another example of how an under-capitalized company could not succeed unless it could extract very valuable ore, quickly. Nor was Dunsheath unique in being tempted to use deliberately misleading assay results to raise capital.

### **Conclusion**

Dunsheath, a struggling small businessmen with under-capitalized and struggling small private companies, for an unrecorded reason decided to become a mine owner, with ambitions to establish a smelter to treat the Tui ore. Bedevilled with a lack of capital and, apart from McAra, competent mining experience, he behaved as so many mining companies did, namely seek advice and subsidies from officials and politicians. He used whatever arguments would serve his purpose to attract small-time investors, fudging the truth as need be but was never proved to have produced false samples to obtain capital. The low grade ore was not easily and cheaply mined by such a small company, which claimed but did not prove it had an ideal treatment process. In the decade after the company collapsed, another company, Norpac, with its larger capital was able to extract and treat a considerable amount of ore for a time, but it also collapsed after several years of work, leaving a serious pollution problem that was not solved until 2014.

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> See articles by Philip Hart in *Journal of Australasian Mining History*: 'Australian Capital in New Zealand: The Te Aroha Silver and Gold Mining Company', vol. 2 (September 2004), pp. 35-53; 'Self-Confidence, Self-Promotion, and Self-Delusion: A Case Study of a Saviour Who Failed', vol. 3 (September 2005), pp. 138-156; 'The New Zealand Exploration Company and Aroha Gold Mines', vol. 10 (October 2012), pp. 112-128; 'Peter Ferguson and his New Era', vol. 12 (October 2014), pp. 98-112.
- <sup>2</sup> Death Certificates of Jeannie Dunsheath, 28 September 1945, 1945/21620; Benjamin John Dunsheath, 7 August 1972, 1972/28704, Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages [hereafter BDM]; *Evening Post*, 12 February 1926, p. 10, 15 February 1926, p. 11, 2 December 1926, p. 6, 19 October 1926, p. 9.
- <sup>3</sup> Company Files, CO-WW 3445, no. 269, Archives New Zealand, Wellington Office [hereafter ANZ-W]; advertisement, *New Zealand Herald*, 6 August 1923, p. 6.
- <sup>4</sup> Auckland High Court, Action Files, BBAE A48/5041, A124/1932; Auckland Supreme Court, Action File: Charles Mayes Graham of Auckland Engineer v. Benjamin John Dunsheath, Auckland, Engineer, BBAE A48/5014, box 105, A214/1932, Archives New Zealand, Auckland Office [hereafter ANZ-A]; Company Files, CO-WW 3445, no. 269, ANZ-W.
- <sup>5</sup> Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 1377 no. 5758, ANZ-A; *New Zealand Herald*, 19 September 1932, p. 5; Death Certificate of Jeannie Dunsheath, 28 September 1945, 1945/21620; Marriage Certificate of Benjamin John Dunsheath, 21 December 1945, 13710/1945, BDM.
- <sup>6</sup> Auckland High Court, Action Files, BBAE A48/5041, box 192, A121/1936; BBAE A307/5527, box 2; Auckland Magistrate's Court, Civil Cases 1952, BBAE 10246/201a; Auckland Supreme Court, Action Files, BBAE 5041/583, A115/1957; Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 1377 no. 5758, ANZ-A.
- <sup>7</sup> Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 1446 no. 16269; box 1487 no. 16638; BBAE 5181, no. 27208, ANZ-A; *Auckland Star*, 13 April 1935, p. 4.
- <sup>8</sup> Auckland Supreme Court, Action Files, BBAE 5041, A357/1956, A358/1956, ANZ-A.
- <sup>9</sup> Auckland Supreme Court, Action Files, BBAE 5041, A194/1956, ANZ-A.
- <sup>10</sup> L.J. Boyer to District Registrar of Companies, 11 April 1966, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 1487 no. 16638, ANZ-A.
- <sup>11</sup> Eric Russell to District Registrar of Companies, 13 April 1966, Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 1487 no. 16638, ANZ-A.
- <sup>12</sup> Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1951, Evidence of B.J. Dunsheath at Hearing of 17 October 1951, 1/1951, BCDG 11289/4a, ANZ-A; B.J. Dunsheath to William Sullivan (Minister of Mines), 3 November 1953, Mines Department, MD 1C, 5/4/282, ANZ-W.
- <sup>13</sup> *New Zealand Herald*, 16 March 1932, p. 7.
- <sup>14</sup> B.J. Dunsheath to A.H. Kimbell (Under-Secretary, Mines Department), 10 November 1932, Mines Department, MD 1A, 23/1/10, Part 2, ANZ-W.
- <sup>15</sup> Company Files, BADZ 5181, box 693, no. 4518, ANZ-A.
- <sup>16</sup> See A.A. Adams to Edwin Mitchelson, 3 September 1929, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/9/25; R.F. Landreth to C.H. Benney, 21 October 1948, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/27/124, ANZ-W.
- <sup>17</sup> **Units used in this paper:** 1 (long) ton = 1.01605 tonnes; 1 foot = 0.3048 m; 1 acre = 0.404686 hectares; 12 pence = 1 shilling; 20 shillings = £1
- <sup>18</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 2 July 1948, p. 5.
- <sup>19</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 13 August 1948, p. 5.
- <sup>20</sup> B.J. Dunsheath to C.H. Benney, 28 November 1949; E.J. Scoble (Inspector of Mines) to C.H. Benney, 23 December 1949, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>21</sup> B.J. Dunsheath to C.H. Benney, 6 February 1950, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>22</sup> B.J. Dunsheath to C.H. Benney (Under-Secretary, Mines Department), 21 July 1950, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-A; Evidence of B.J. Dunsheath at Hearing of 17 October 1951, Te Aroha Warden's Court, Mining Applications 1951, BCDG 11289/4a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 20 June 1952, p. 5.
- <sup>23</sup> Thames School of Mines, Assay Book 1941-52, entries for 16 January 1950, 21 February 1950, School of Mines Archives, Thames; B.J. Dunsheath to Controller of Customs, 9 February 1950; B.J. Dunsheath to C.H. Benney, 21 July 1950, 29 August 1950, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>24</sup> J.F. Dawson (Medical Officer of Health) to Town Clerk, Te Aroha, 26 April 1948; Norman Annabell (Te Aroha Borough Engineer) to Te Aroha Borough Council, 28 June 1948, 30 June 1948, Health Department, YCBE 1990/404a, ANZ-A; Norman Annabell to Te Aroha Borough Council, 14 November 1948, A/26/6/1, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha; *Te Aroha News*, 21 May 1948, p. 5, 23 July 1948, p. 5.
- <sup>25</sup> *Te Aroha News*, 2 July 1948, p. 5.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*; B.J. Dunsheath to W.A. Clark (Mayor of Te Aroha), 3 July 1948, Health Department, YCBE 1990/404a, ANZ-A.

- <sup>27</sup> Te Aroha Warden's Court, Notes of Evidence at Hearing of 11 August 1948, General Correspondence 1948, BBAV 11584/7a, ANZ-A; *Te Aroha News*, 13 August 1948, p. 5, 17 August 1945, p. 5; Judgment of W.H. Freeman (Warden), 15 September 1948, Health Department, YCBE 1990/404a, ANZ-A.
- <sup>28</sup> Gilchrist Sons & Burns to J.F. Dawson, 16 September 1948; J.F. Dawson to T.R. Ritchie (Director-General of Health), 20 September 1948, Health Department, YCBE 1990/404a; C.H. Benney to Mining Registrar, Te Aroha, 30 September 1948, Te Aroha Warden's Court, General Correspondence 1948, BBAV 11584/7d, ANZ-A.
- <sup>29</sup> J.F. Dawson to T.R. Ritchie, 16 December 1948, Health Department, YCBE 1990/404a, ANZ-A; B.J. Dunsheath to C.H. Benney, 26 January 1949, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/27/124, ANZ-W.
- <sup>30</sup> F.S. Maclean (Director, Division of Public Hygiene) to T.R. Ritchie, 3 May 1949, Health Department, YCBE 1990/404a, ANZ-A; T.R. Ritchie to C.H. Benney, 4 May 1949, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/27/124, ANZ-W.
- <sup>31</sup> E.J. Scoble (Inspector of Mines) to C.H. Benney, 6 May 1949, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/27/124, ANZ-W.
- <sup>32</sup> Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Special Meeting of 22 November 1949, Te Aroha Borough Council Minute Book 1947-50, pp. 436-437; Applications for Prospecting Licenses, 6, 7, 10/1949, A/26/6/1, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.
- <sup>33</sup> A.W. Satchwell (Inspector of Health) to J.F. Dawson, 20 January 1950; J.F. Dawson to Town Clerk, Te Aroha, 7 February 1950, Health Department, YCBE 1900/524a, ANZ-A; Reports of Works Committee Meetings of 18 January 1940, 15 February 1950, Te Aroha Borough Council, Minute Book 1940-53, p. 17; Te Aroha Borough Council, Minutes of Works Committee Meeting of 15 February 1950, Minute Book 1947-50, p. 473, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.
- <sup>34</sup> Te Aroha Borough Council, Report of Works Committee Meeting of 31 October 1950, Te Aroha Borough Council Minute Book 1947-50, p. 630; Report of Works Committee Meeting of 13 August 1952; Minutes of Meeting of Borough Council of 21 July 1953, Te Aroha Borough Council Minute Book 1950-3, pp. 343, 531, Matamata-Piako District Council Archives, Te Aroha.
- <sup>35</sup> C.H. Benney to E.J. Scoble, 6 August 1948; C.H. Benney to Secretary, Department of Industries and Commerce, 6 August 1948, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/27/124, ANZ-W.
- <sup>36</sup> E.J. Scoble to C.H. Benney, 16 August 1948, Inspector of Mines, BBDO A902, M85, ANZ-A.
- <sup>37</sup> R.F. Landreth to C.H. Benney, 21 October 1948, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/27/124, ANZ-W.
- <sup>38</sup> C.H. Benney to Minister of Mines, 2 November 1948, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/27/124, ANZ-W.
- <sup>39</sup> E.J. Scoble to C.H. Benney, 23 December 1949, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>40</sup> Memorandum by C.H. Benney, n.d. [early September 1950], Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>41</sup> C.H. Benney to William Sullivan, 5 September 1950, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>42</sup> William Sullivan to A.E. Lyttle, 9 October 1950, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>43</sup> Town Clerk's Office, Te Aroha, 'Confidential Report of Delegation to Wellington', 9 February 1951, Health Department, YCBE 1990/524a, ANZ-A.
- <sup>44</sup> B.J. Benney to C.H. Benney, 6 October 1950; E.J. Scoble to C.H. Benney, 13 October 1950; R.F. Landreth to C.H. Benney, 17 October 1950, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>45</sup> C.H. Benney to B.J. Dunsheath, 23 May 1951, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>46</sup> B.J. Dunsheath to C.H. Benney, 9 August 1949, 6 September 1949, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/27/124, ANZ-W.
- <sup>47</sup> Birth Certificate of Walter Haydon Burton, 1885/759; Death Certificates of Walter Haydn Burton (father), 4 April 1945, 1945/16733; (son), 4 January 1870, 1970/26260, BDM.
- <sup>48</sup> B.J. Dunsheath to C.H. Benney, 6 February 1950, 6 June 1952, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-A; E.J. Scoble to C.H. Benney, 6 February 1950, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>49</sup> B.J. Dunsheath to C.H. Benney, 6 February 1950, 11 July 1952; B.J. Dunsheath to R.F. Landreth, 6 June 1952, 19 June 1952, Mines Department, MD 1, 23/2/1218, Part 1, ANZ-W.
- <sup>50</sup> B.J. , to E.J. Scoble, 21 November 1949, Inspector of Mines, BBDO A902, M85, ANZ-A.
- <sup>51</sup> 'Obituary – Bert McAra', *Ohinemuri Regional History Journal*, no. 35 (September 1991), p. 47; J.B. McAra, *Gold Mining at Waihi, 1878-1952*, Waihi, 1978, pp. 270-274; Waihi School of Mines, Minute Book of Council Meetings 1946-51, Waihi School of Mines Papers, MS 315, Library of the Auckland Institute and War Memorial Museum.
- <sup>52</sup> Peter McAra, 'Lamb Among Wolves – Bert McAra's time as manager of Auckland Smelting Company's Tui Mine, Te Aroha, 1949-52' (unpublished paper, 2014), p. 1; J.B. McAra, 'Recollections of My Association with the Tui Mine, Te Aroha, 1950-1973' unpublished typescript, 1985, p. 1.
- <sup>53</sup> B.J. Dunsheath to C.H. Benney, 6 December 1948, Mines Department, MD 1, 10/27/124, ANZ-W.

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